

Membership Balance Plan  
Department of Defense Military Family Readiness Council

Agency: Department of Defense (DoD)

1. Authority: The Secretary of Defense, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. § 1781a (as amended), the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) of 1972 (5 U.S.C., Appendix, as amended), and 41 CFR § 102-3.50(a) (required by statute), established the Department of Defense Military Family Readiness Council (“the Council”).
2. Mission/Function:
  - a. The Council’s duties include:
    - 1) Review and make recommendations to the Secretary of Defense regarding the policy and plans required under 10 U.S.C. § 1781b.
    - 2) Monitor requirements for the support of military family readiness by the DoD.
    - 3) Evaluate and assess the effectiveness of the military family readiness programs and activities of the DoD.
  - b. The Council, no later than February 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, shall submit to the Secretary of Defense and the congressional defense committees a report on military family readiness. Each report, at a minimum, shall include the following:
    - 1) An assessment of the adequacy and effectiveness of the military family readiness programs and activities of the DoD during the preceding fiscal year in meeting the needs and requirements of military families.
    - 2) Recommendations on actions to be taken to improve the capability of the military family readiness programs and activities of the DoD to meet the needs and requirements of military families, including actions relating to the allocation of funding and other resources to and among such programs and activities.
3. Points of View: The Council shall be comprised of no more than 18 members.
  - a. The Council, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. § 1781a(b), as amended, shall be comprised of 18 members, appointed as specified below:
    - 1) The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)) as the Council’s Chairperson.
    - 2) The senior enlisted advisors from each of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, except that two of these members may instead be selected from among the spouses of the senior enlisted advisors.

The Secretary of Defense shall appoint two Senior Enlisted Advisors beginning with the Navy and Marine Corps and followed by the Army and Air Force. The Secretary of Defense shall

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appoint two spouses of Senior Enlisted Advisors beginning with the Army and Air Force and followed by the Navy and Marine Corps. A spouse of a Senior Enlisted Advisor of the Army, Navy, Air Force or Marine Corps appointed by the Secretary of Defense, unless he or she is a full-time or permanent part-time Federal officer or employee, shall be appointed to the Council as an expert and consultant under the authority of 5 U.S.C. § 3109 and serve as a special Government employee (SGE). The term of service for Senior Enlisted Advisors shall be two years with annual renewals. The term of service for spouses of Senior Enlisted Advisors shall be either two years or until the conclusion of the Service member's tour of duty as Senior Enlisted Advisor during which the spouse was appointed to the Council, whichever is earlier, with annual renewals.

- 3) The Director of the Office of Community Support for Military Families with Special Needs.
- b. In addition, the Secretary of Defense must appoint:
- 1) One representative from each of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, each of whom shall be a member of the armed force to be represented.
  - 2) One representative of the Army National Guard or the Air National Guard, who may be a member of the National Guard.
  - 3) One spouse or parent of a member of each of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, two of whom shall be the spouse or parent of an active component member and two of whom shall be the spouse or parent of a reserve component member.
  - 4) Three individuals appointed by the Secretary of Defense from among representatives of military family organizations, including military family organizations of families of members of the regular components and families of members of the reserve components.

With regard to meeting the requirements of 3b(1) above, the Secretary of Defense, based upon the USD(P&R) recommendation, appoints the senior military personnel officer from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and the Air Forces to the Council. These officers, normally in the grade of Lieutenant General and Vice Admiral, are responsible for military and civilian personnel policy oversight and program management of their respective Military Services, to include all family related programs and policies for military, retired military members, and their families. Each officer in this appointment category is appointed a regular Government (*ex officio*) member of the Council, and serves a two-year term of service, renewed on an annual basis.

With regard to meeting the requirements of 3b(2) above, the Secretary of Defense has directed the Director, National Guard Bureau through the USD(P&R) to nominate an individual to represent the Army and the Air National Guard beginning with the Air National Guard. The Director, National Guard Bureau, in considering potential nominees, will select someone with a broad knowledge about the complex issues facing National Guard members, their spouses, and children. Ideally, the nominee will have experience with pre-deployment, deployment and post-deployment issues, to include employer support of National Guard members. If the Secretary of Defense appoints a person who is a

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full-time or permanent part-time federal officer or employee or a member of the Army or Air National Guard, then he or she shall be appointed as a regular government employee. But, if the Secretary appoints a person who is not a full-time or permanent part-time federal officer or employee or a member of the Army or Air National Guard, then he or she shall be appointed as an expert and consultant under the authority of 5 U.S.C. § 3109 to serve as a SGE member of the Council. Representation on the Council shall rotate between the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard every two years on a calendar basis with annual renewals.

With regard to meeting the requirements of 3b(3) above, the Secretary of Defense has directed the USD(P&R), in consultation with the Secretaries of the Military Departments, to nominate four individuals who are either the spouse or parent of a member of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force, two of whom shall be the spouse or parent of a Regular Component member and two of whom shall be the spouse or parent of a Reserve Component member. The USD(P&R) and the Secretaries of the Military Departments, in considering potential nominees, will select individuals with a broad understanding of the complex socio-economical issues facing Regular and Reserve Component members of the Military Services, their spouses, and their children. Ideally, the nominee will have experience with pre-deployment, deployment and post-deployment issues. Spouse or parent nominees of Regular Component members shall begin with the Army and Navy followed by the Air Force and Marine Corps. Spouse or parent nominees of Reserve Component members shall begin with the Air Force and Marine Corps followed by the Army and the Navy. A spouse or parent of a member of the Regular or Reserve Component appointed by the Secretary of Defense, unless he or she is a full-time or permanent part-time Federal officer or employee, shall be appointed to the Council as an expert and consultant under the authority of 5 U.S.C. § 3109 and serve as a SGE. The term of service for all individuals appointed under 3b(3) above, shall be limited to two years, with annual renewals.

With regard to meeting the requirements of 3b(4) above, the Secretary of Defense has directed the USD(P&R) to develop a plan that balances the rotation of representatives of military family organizations among the major, nationally recognized military family organizations, to include a balance among those representing families of members of both the Regular and the Reserve Components. Once approved by the Secretary of Defense, this rotational plan will be reviewed, updated if necessary, and approved by the Secretary every three years. In developing the rotational plan, the USD(P&R) strives to ensure a balance among organizations that support all ranks and Military Services. Organizations identified by the USD(P&R) and approved by the Secretary of Defense will nominate potential candidates for the USD(P&R) consideration, and subsequent nomination to the Secretary of Defense. Individuals appointed by the Secretary of Defense under 3b(4) above represent the interests of all military family organizations and, as such, shall not be considered representative members. Instead, each individual appointed by the Secretary of Defense who is not a full-time or permanent part-time Federal officer or employee shall be appointed as an expert and consultant under the authority of 5 U.S.C. § 3109 to serve as a SGE. The term of service for all appointees meeting the requirements of 3b(4) above is three years, with annual renewals.

Each member, based upon his or her individual and professional experiences, provides his or her best judgment on matters before the Council, and he or she does so without representing any particular point of view and in a manner that is free from conflict of interest. Council members appointed by the Secretary of Defense, who are not full-time or permanent part-time Federal officers or employees,

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shall be appointed to serve as experts and consultants under the authority of 5 U.S.C. § 3109 and to serve as SGE members. Board members shall be appointed on an annual basis by the Secretary of Defense.

The Secretary of Defense may appoint experts and consultants, with relevant expertise, to assist the Council on an ad-hoc basis. These non-member experts and consultants, who do not count toward the Council's total membership, shall be appointed to serve as SGEs under the authority of 5 U.S.C. § 3019; however, these experts and consultants have no voting rights on the Council and are prohibited from engaging in Council deliberations.

4. Other Balance Factors: None
5. Candidate Identification Process: DoD, in selecting potential candidates for those members where the Department has discretion, reviews:
  - a. The educational and professional credentials of professionals who work for military family organizations supporting Service members and their families.
  - b. The personal experiences of parents and spouses of Service members and, members of the National Guard as it relates to military family issues.

As a result of statutory requirement, the Secretary of Defense has directed the Director, National Guard and the USD(P&R) to take specific steps outlined in section 3 above, for certain categories of members.

The Council's Designated Federal Officer (DFO) works with the various stakeholders, to include senior DoD officers and employees, to identify potential candidates. Where the Department has latitude, the DFO, in consultation with the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy, reviews the credentials of each individual and narrows the list of potential candidates. The list is then forwarded to the USD(P&R) for further scrutiny in accordance with governing Federal statutes and regulations and governing DoD policies/procedures.

During the USD(P&R) review, he or she strives to achieve a balance between the personal, educational, and professional credentials of the individuals and the anticipated subject matters that will be reviewed by the Council to achieve expertise in points of view regarding anticipated topics.

Prior to nominating the potential candidates, the list of candidates will undergo a review by the Department of Defense Office of General Counsel (DoD OGC) and the Office of the Advisory Committee Management Officer to ensure compliance with Federal and DoD governance requirements, including compliance with the advisory committee's charter and membership balance plan. Following this review, the USD(P&R) formally nominates the potential candidates to the Secretary of Defense for approval; pursuant to DoD policy, only the Secretary or the Deputy Secretary of Defense can invite or approve the appointment of individuals to serve on DoD established or supported advisory committees.

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Following approval by the Secretary or Deputy Secretary of Defense, the candidates are required to complete the necessary appointment paperwork, to include meeting ethics requirements stipulated by the Office of Government Ethics for advisory committee members who are appointed as SGE members.

Council and subcommittee member vacancies will be filled in the same manner as described in the previous six paragraphs above.

6. Subcommittee Balance: The Department, when necessary and consistent with the Council's mission and DoD policies and procedures, may establish subcommittees, task groups, or working groups to support the Council.

The Secretary or the Deputy Secretary of Defense shall approve the appointment of subcommittee members in the same manner as members of the Council. Individuals considered for appointment to any subcommittee of the Council may come from the Council itself or new nominees, as recommended by the Board's sponsor and based upon the subject matter under consideration, but they must be approved by the Secretary or Deputy Secretary before participating in any subcommittee work.

Subcommittee members, if not full-time or part-time Government employees, shall be appointed to serve as experts and consultants under the authority of 5 U.S.C. § 3109, and shall serve as SGEs, whose appointments must be renewed by the Secretary of Defense on an annual basis.

7. Other: The DoD adheres to the rules and regulations issued by the Office of Government Ethics and the Administration's prohibition against registered Federal lobbyists.
8. Date Prepared: December 13, 2012